



CEL^{lent} NEWS

MAY 2020

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Xceleration
Volleyball Club

John B. David, Editor

Congratulations

CLASS OF 2020

A Year Like No Other for 17 Xceleration Seniors

You did it! In the weeks ahead, you will accomplish one of the early milestones of your lives – getting your high school diploma! While the coronavirus crisis brings a painful and abrupt end to senior year at high schools – no proms, no class trips, no caps, no gowns, no commencement ceremonies – the reality and the loss of these senior traditions pale in comparison to keeping yourself and your family healthy. Your health is what matters most, and at the end of the day, it's the diploma that you will get no matter what, and that cannot be taken away from you. It's important also to remember that HOPE is not cancelled... LOVE for one another is not cancelled... COMMUNITY is not cancelled... HEALTH & WELLNESS are not cancelled... LIFE is not cancelled... We move on!

For a lot of you, getting the diploma is the completion of a really trying but amazing period of your lives. This is a major step in the journey of your lives, one that should be recognized for its immense significance. It is an act not only of personal commitment, but also one of pride – for you, your parents, friends, family, and Xceleration. You all worked hard to get to this day, and your work did not go to waste. Your high school diploma is a wonderful tool in this world, one that opens many

doors of opportunity for anyone who is lucky enough to have one.

But getting a diploma is not an end goal in itself; it is instead part of a larger journey of life. Wherever your future takes you, let it take you somewhere. Life is a journey, and all your accomplishments you achieve during its course should be taken as starting points for further achievements. It is a launching point, projecting you to wherever your futures are meant to take you. Wherever your future leads, we ask that you keep your love for our club – your club – alive. But today, we celebrate your accomplishments in this special tribute to you.

As we've said before, life is a journey – we don't stop growing once you get your diplomas. Life is about growing, and hopefully being in the Xceleration program also gave you opportunities to continue growing and to learn new skills that you will carry for the rest of your lives.

Thank you for choosing Xceleration to launch your future and as a partner in your athletic and academic journeys. The club is proud of your decision to join Xceleration and proud that you will take that next great leap forward. We will always support you and your goals, and we're honored that you've taken us

(Continued on the next page)

Congratulations

THE CLASS OF 2020

(Continued from the front page)

with you throughout your incredible journey.

Finally, congratulations to our Xceleration families and friends as we celebrate our graduates. You traveled this journey together, and your love and support contributed to our athletes' achievement and success. **YOU DID IT!**



No Graduation? Tips on Celebrating Missed Milestones During COVID-19

Cancelled graduation ceremonies can be as hard on parents and guardians as it is on the students themselves. They will not have the feeling of pride when they walk across that graduation stage. You may not get the picture of your student walking receiving their diploma, but they have completed their degree and that is worthy of celebration!

- You can **host your own graduation at home** where everyone dresses up and poses for pictures as a family.
- If the school mails home paper diplomas, you can make a **celebration out of opening the envelope**.
- You can **video call** or have extended family on speaker phone to add to the celebratory atmosphere.
- There may not be a valedictorian speech, but your student can **share their favorite memories** from school and what they are looking forward to in the next stage of their life.
- If you miss the commencement speaker, there are plenty of **inspiring speeches online and TED Talks** can be a great place to start.
- For students, you can **reflect on graduation with friends by creating a graduation hashtag for your school**. Using the hashtag, you can post pictures, memories, and best wishes. If you are Photoshop savvy, you can create mash-up photos of everyone in their graduation best or you can use the materials on the hashtag to create mini graduation videos!



Photo Galleries

You can find more photos in the [Galleries](#) page of our website. If you would like to share your pictures during the season, please post them on our Facebook group page, and they may work their way into future issues XCELLent News.

Instagram

Xceleration has an Instagram presence where you can view our posts throughout the season:

XCELERATIONVBC



Instagram

Facebook Group Page

Xceleration has a group page! Join our [Facebook](#) fan page and participate in the discussion forum where you'll hear about our athletes and various ongoing events. Search for "Xceleration Volleyball Club" and ask to join. Or scan the QR code with your mobile device.



Find us on:
facebook®



Photos courtesy of parents and Tomas Pineda. [Click here to see more.](#)





J-Ross Speaks

Dear Xceleration Class of 2020,

For some of you it is the culmination of a few years of working with us on the college development side of your volleyball careers. For others it's been one concentrated year of working with us. Either way, we have thoroughly enjoyed working with all of you and are so very happy and excited for you. We know how difficult this year has been with the COVID-19 crisis that has cut your club season short, as you take the next step in volleyball and in life. We also know very well the sacrifices that you and your families

have made to reach this point and we admire you all for it. THANK YOU for allowing us to be a small part of it.

As you can see from the pages that follow, not all our Seniors are continuing their volleyball careers in college. Those players have elected to attend a college where intercollegiate volleyball was not an option for them. Many will opt to play club volleyball, others intramural, and others may elect not to have competitive volleyball as a part of their college experience. Either way and, as you have heard us say many a time, the end result does not have to be playing in college. The end result was that you went through the process, discussed your options with us and with your families, and made an informed decision on your future college plans.

And there most definitely is a process. Each of these players has taken the time to meet with us and to communicate with a myriad of college coaching staffs. I am sure that most, if not all, of these players will tell you that they experienced many joys and some disappointments along the way. That, too, is a part of the process and a good life lesson as well.

Every player you see in this edition of our newsletter has put in countless hours of practice, training, conditioning, tournament, travel, classes, and studying to get to where they each are today. Rest assured there were many fretful nights and tears along the way, but they helped shape every individual you read about here.

As a College Development staff, we thank you so very much for working with us, trusting us, and allowing us to be a small part of your development as a player and person. As a club, we are so proud of your efforts and congratulate you on your accomplishments, now and to come. As coaches and administrators, the reward is not in the medals or successes individually. Rather, it is in watching you develop into the young women you are as you head off to this next part of your life. Do so confidently and proudly. You have worked hard to get to where you are.

To all of your parents, congratulations and be very proud of the young women you have raised. I know there will be a few lumps in your throats in the weeks ahead, but it's a part of the process and a sign that you care so much about your daughters. You have done a wonderful job raising these girls and preparing them for what's ahead.

You are all incredible young women who I have no doubt have many great things ahead of you, on and off the volleyball court! Embrace the challenges ahead with the same grit and determination that you have shown all of us who have been watching you.

Congrats to ALL of you. Remember one thing, you will always be a part of Xceleration and you are welcome back any time you care to visit. And, after four years when you've completed your college education, we're always looking forward to having our alums come back to coach our teams! We hire alums on the spot!

Jim





Andy's Story

The 2020 Seniors... The season that none of us will forget for many reasons.

The lone Junior on the team **Emma Engstrom** had the most prophetic line of the season during the Sierra National Qualifier, "Let's leave it all on the court cuz this could be the last time we play this year." Of course, Emma was referring to the now infamous COVID-19 Pandemic.

THE TEAM

Parts of this team had been with the club since they were 15s (and even from the 12s). Brett and I had been looking forward to coaching this group for some time. Here's a quick timeline on the season:

REGIONAL QUALIFIER

The Team played great! They beat Absolute and we improved on our starting seed. Downside, we found out we would be without UC Riverside-bound **Emily Casner** for the year! Not good, but we embraced adversity and grew from it. Christmas came quickly, next up was back-to-back Power Leagues on the 4th and 5th of January where the girls played extremely well over the two marathon days to pull out a 4th and 5th.

MUSIC CITY QUALIFIER

Next was USAV's Music City Qualifier in Nashville, TN where the team finished in 5th place – the highest of any Xceleration team ever!

POWER LEAGUE

Then came Power League 3 where we were without Emma and **Claire Conners**. The team overcame big time to once again finish 5th, with a huge come-from-behind win over a very good Encore team.

TRIPLE CROWN NIT

Then it was the showcase in Kansas City! The girls were able to go 4-4 under adverse conditions. Girls also got stuck in the Elevator at the hotel. 😊

REGIONAL FINALS

In the Regional final, the team played some unbelievable volleyball, finishing 3-3 and falling 3 points short of where we wanted to be. We were without UCSD-bound **Izzi Strand** all weekend. **Ishana Ram** (who was amazing all year) did an unbelievable job running a 5-1. Brett and I were so proud of this group and how they handled their business. Red Rock, who we had beaten 3 times during the qualification process, ended up 3 points in front of us for the last bid.

SIERRA NATIONAL QUALIFIER

On to Reno where we had our only rough tournament of the year. The good news though is that we ended getting our JN BID because Rage Greg won an Open bid and naturally accepted.

We came back to have an optional practice on Tuesday, March 12th, 2020. Little did we know that when we turned out the lights at the end of practice, the following night the NBA would shut down, along with EVERYTHING else.

As I write this, USA nationals are still on for the end of June. We'd love to see these scholar-athletes have one more chance – as a team to put their awesome skills on display.

The team ran at the highest passing, setting and hitting efficiency of any team that we've ever coached!

(Continued on the next page)



Andy's Story (continued)

THE PLAYERS

The Junior **Emma Engstrom**: Best passer we've ever had in the club. Unbelievable touch on the ball, incredible teammate, driven, focused, and one heck of a player. Dartmouth is going to be very happy when she comes in 2021!

The Seniors:

Haleigh Brown – Was a huge bright light for us. Can play all positions on the court, has a tremendous attitude. Haleigh had some huge moments for us during the year, especially Power League #3. One of her greatest qualities is leadership ability. Very coachable and extremely competitive. She will do great things at College of Marin, playing both indoor and beach!

Emily Casner – Never got to “play” for us this year. Felt like we could have competed with anyone in the country with a healthy Emily. She did the right thing and had shoulder surgery in early January. Tremendous player, athlete, teammate and leader. UC Riverside is very lucky to have this student-athlete coming there.

Claire Conners – The nicest, most respectful player I have ever coached. Claire wants to be a Nurse! PERFECT MATCH. She is calm, cool, and collected. Can do it all on the court. Did so much for us this year. Her teammates all love her. Simmons University – get ready, you're getting a great one.

Coco Ikpe – The surprise of the season. I remember Steve Casner talking about Coco and what a great student-athlete she was. Coco was amazing for us all year long, playing against some of the best competition in the country. Very coachable and competitive. Hit a ball at the end of the Encore match at the 3-foot line. Cal State - Dominguez Hills is very fortunate to have this incredible talent coming there.

Izzy “Bella” Lipacis – On her way to join Meaghan Holman at Colorado College. Izzy played mainly in the opposite position for us this year. She is a tremendous all-around player that can play all positions on the court at a high level. I've told Izzy many times she could be an All-American level at Colorado College. A very special player with a team-first attitude.

Ishana Ram – I knew Ishana was pretty darn good. I found out she was even better than billed. Was incredibly durable for us this year. We played 16 hard-fought games at the Regional Final and Ishana was in every play. It was a monumental performance. She plays with such competitive fire but also with such joy. Emory University, get ready for a special student-athlete!

Dayna Riggio-Kerley – Huge part of our success this year. She can do it all on the court, including setting which we needed from time to time. So coachable, incredibly talented. Platform is as good as it gets, Coach Lisa at College of Marin is getting a special player.

Madi Risch – Had the best year of any left side we have coached. Hit and passed at a very high percentage. Held down middle back on defense. Driven, focused, competitive, great teammate, highly skilled. UPenn will have 2 of the best ever to come out of Xceleration!

Izzi Strand – A tremendous competitor with unlimited physical tools. A big reason for our success this year. We ran a modified 6-2 with Izzi. Playing opposite when she rotated through the front row. In Power League #3, she willed us to our 5th place finish. Izzi fit right into our scheme and was a great teammate. UCSD is going D1 this year. This kid is a big time D1 player.

(Continued on the next page)



Andy's Story (continued)

Sadie Peete – Came over from NorCal and fit right in with this team. Sadie is one of the hardest working and most passionate players I have ever coached. A very versatile player who played Libero at Power League #3 when Emma was out. Played on the left and right pin depending on where we needed her. Incredibly coachable and competitive. Cal Lutheran will love having this young lady in their program.

Taylor Whyte – Maybe our best all-around player. Passed and hit at a very high percentage. Taylor, like Madi, played middle back on D and was exceptional. Her best strength might be her blocking ability... we would move her to the right side to match with their left side. Taylor is everything you want as a coach. Chico State will never look back having Taylor in their gym.

THANK YOU

Huge thanks to my Co-coach **Brett Leggitt**. We continue to evolve to bring the best we can to the team.

To **Jeremy Swann**, my previous Co-coach and now club owner – you're doing amazing things! Thanks for another wonderful year!

To **Leslie Ray** – you're always amazing. Thanks so much for all you do for the club.

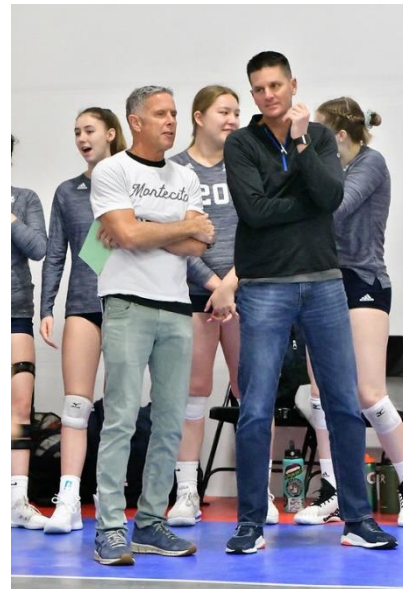
To **John David** – amazing job again. No one is better. The newsletter is beyond belief.

To **Normie and Tomas Pineda** – never met 2 more committed and passionate people. It always warms my heart when I see you 2 at the tournaments.

To **Jim Ross** – probably the best recruiting director in the country... correction, THE BEST! Everyone knows it. Another great year for you.

To **Jennifer Graham** – Brett and I couldn't have done it without you. Unbelievable job of making sure the girls were always taken care of!

Andy



Top row, left to right: Claire Conners, Coco Ikpe, Dayna Riggio-Kerley, Taylor Whyte, Bella Lipacis, Emily Casner, Ishana Ram, Emma Engstrom.

Front row, left to right: Madi Risch, Haleigh Brown, Sadie Peete and Izzi Strand.

Congratulations

THE CLASS OF 2020



16 Haleigh Brown
Alhambra High School

20 Emily Casner
Vanden High School

11 Claire Conners
Albany High School



6 Olivia Elliott
Acalanes High School

4 Coco Ikpe
Vanden High School

8 Isabella Lipacis
Head-Royce School



5 Sara McBride
Benicia High School

6 Lauren McGrath
Head-Royce School

1 Chloe Ortega
St. Patrick-St. Vincent High School



Congratulations

THE CLASS OF 2020



1 Isabel Strand

Monte Vista High School



6 Ishana Ram

Foothill High School



12 Julia Remigio

St. Mary's College High School



17 Dayna Riggio-Kerley

Albany High School



5 Madison Risch

Acalanes High School



18 Sadie Peete

California High School



12 Taylor Whyte

Vanden High School



9 Kylie Wood

Acalanes High School


**The
 best
 IS YET TO
 come
 CLASS OF
 2020**

HALEIGH BROWN

Alhambra High School/College of Marin – Kentfield, CA

College of Marin is a public community college in Marin County, CA, with two campuses, one in Kentfield, and the second in Novato. It is the only institution operated by the Marin Community College District. Originally known as Marin Junior College when established in 1926, the College was renamed College of Marin in 1947. Each semester, about 10,000 students are enrolled in over 1,100 credit classes. Approximately 100 international students participate in College of Marin's International Student Program. Nearly 6,000 students attend the college's community education and community services classes. College of Marin is known for its theatre department, which has the highest transfer acceptance to Juilliard of any two-year college in the nation.

Haleigh was a Varsity starter all four years at both Pinole Valley HS and Alhambra HS. She has progressed each year, from Tri-County Athletic League (TCAL) Honorable Mention in 2016; Team Captain, TCAL 1st Team All-League & League MVP in 2017; Diablo Athletic League (DAL) Honorable Mention in 2018; and Team Captain and DAL 2nd Team All-League in 2019.

Haleigh is on the President's List and is continuously on the Honor Roll. She served as Class President in 2016 and 2017 and earned the Scholar Athlete Award from 2016-2019.

She will be playing both volleyball/beach volleyball for College of Marin.

Haleigh, we are extremely proud of all that you have accomplished over the last four years of high school. It has been amazing seeing you grow into the intelligent, kind, confident, fun-loving, strong, and beautiful person that you are today. We are beyond excited for you to continue to focus on your education while still doing what you love, playing volleyball.

We still remember how you used to toddle around the gym at 2 years old, chasing balls & waiting for your chance to be on the court. We still see that same excitement & love you have for the game & are thrilled we'll get to see you play indoor volleyball this fall & in the sand in the spring. We are thankful that volleyball, your coaches, and your teammates at Xcel have been such a big part of your life. They have all helped to shape you into who you are... a determined little warrior!

Everything that you put your mind to, you have shown yourself that you can accomplish or overcome through positivity and hard work. We admire you for your strength and determination & hope you carry that drive with you throughout your entire life. That is what makes you so special & it will help you to be successful in anything you do. This new chapter you are starting is up to you! It is very fitting that you have decided to focus on an education path and degree that will help & serve others. It matches that caring spirit of yours. Our hope is that you continue to thrive & always reach for the stars!

We are always here to love & support you in any way we can!

Love, your biggest fans ~Mom, Dad, and Tyson



**Go
Dogs**

HALEIGH BROWN



EMILY CASNER

Vanden High School / UC Riverside – Riverside, CA

The **University of California, Riverside (UCR or UC Riverside)** is a public research university in Riverside, CA. It is one of the 10 general campuses of the University of California system that sits on 1,900 acres in a suburban district of Riverside, with a branch campus of 20 acres in Palm Desert. In 1907, the predecessor to UCR was founded as the UC Citrus Experiment Station, Riverside which pioneered research in biological pest control and the use of growth regulators responsible for extending the citrus growing season in California from four to nine months. Some of the world's most important research collections on citrus diversity and entomology, as well as science fiction and photography, are located at Riverside.

Emily was the Monticello Empire League MVP in her Junior and Senior Years. She will enter UC Riverside as Undeclared.

Emily,

It has been our pleasure watching you grow into the young lady you have become. We are proud of your accomplishments on and off of the court and cannot wait to see you compete in college and in life. What makes us the most proud is your ability to bounce back! There have been many trying times from different clubs to injuries, just remember that you are defined by how you choose to respond! We Love You Little Girl and MAKE IT HAPPEN!

*Love,
Mom and Dad*



EMILY CASNER



CLAIRE CONNERS

Albany High School/Simmons University – Boston, MA

Simmons University (Simmons College until 2018) is a private women focused undergraduate university and private co-educational graduate school in Boston, MA. It was established in 1899. Simmons was founded in 1899 with a bequest by John Simmons, a wealthy clothing manufacturer in Boston. Simmons founded the college based on the belief that women ought to live independently by offering a Liberal Arts education for undergraduate women to integrate into professional work experience. Simmons is a member of the Colleges of the Fenway consortium, which also includes Emmanuel College, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Simmons absorbed Garland Junior College in 1976. Wheelock College, a former member, merged with Boston University to become the Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development.

Claire was a 4-year letter winner in Volleyball at Albany HS, where she was the Tri-County Athletic League (TCAL) MVP and Co-Captain in her Senior year for the league champion Cougars. She was All League in her Junior and Sophomore seasons, the latter of which also garnered a league championship title for Albany HS.

Outside of volleyball, Claire is a member and officer of Best Buddies (2013-2020) and a member of Treble Chamber Ensemble (2017-2019). She will enter Simmons University as a Nursing student.



*Claire,
Your Mom will deliver
her note to you
personally.*

Xcel



CLAIRE CONNERS



FUN FACT:

Claire first joined Xceleration as a member of the 12Blue in the inaugural season of the 12-and-under age group for the club.



OLIVIA ELLIOTT

Acalanes High School/San Jose State University – San Jose, CA

San José State University is a comprehensive public university and is the founding school of the 23 campus California State University system. It holds the distinction of being the oldest public institution of higher education on the West Coast of the U.S. SJSU's total enrollment is approximately 30,000, including nearly 6,000 graduate students. More San José State University alumni are hired by Silicon Valley firms than any other college or university, and philanthropic support of SJSU is among the highest in the CSU system.

Olivia is a two-year girls Varsity player at Acalanes HS, where in 2019 the Dons were the NCS Division III Finalist - 2nd Place and qualified for the California State Playoffs Division 2. In 2019, Olivia served as Head Coach for Stanley Middle School's 7th Grade, A Team. In 2017 and 2018, Olivia was a Volleyball Trainer for LMYA Volleyball.

Olivia will enter San Jose State University in the Honors Program to pursue a degree in Justice Studies with a focus on Criminology.

Olivia!

Volleyball has been such a passion for you all during middle school and high school. You started this journey in the 5th grade with your mom as the coach in the LMYA volleyball league. In the 7th grade, after playing on the Stanley Middle School team, you asked if you could play club volleyball! That's when the volleyball journey really began! And what an exciting, adventurous and fun journey it has been.

You have worked with a variety of coaches and learned so much, and you have had fun with each of them. We have really enjoyed watching your skill level and confidence increase over the years! You met the challenges of learning new positions, and worked hard to succeed on the court. You started as a setter at Pacific Rim. Then the Acalanes Freshman coach moved you Middle Hitter since you were the tallest on the team. And you liked that position better! Then the Acalanes Varsity coach moved you to the Right Side because you had a "big block". And you liked that position even more! And then in your Senior Year your team qualified for the finals in NCS Division III! And you loved that!

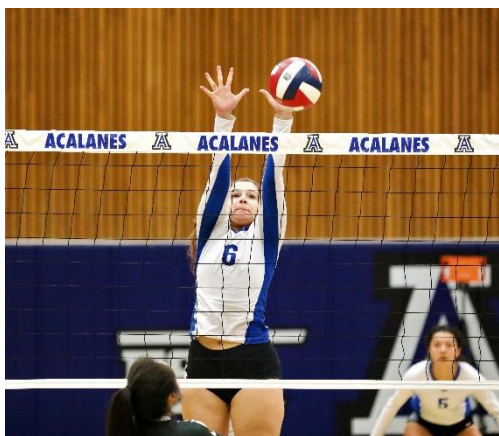
And the awards that your coaches gave you over the years reflected your hard work and positive attitude on the court; "Wildcat Award", "Sky's the Limit", Most Improved, Most Inspirational. You have so much fun on the court, and you are always smiling and laughing. And it was infectious; you and your teammates made it look like you were having a great time! As a parent, watching your hard work, combined with your passion for the game, your joy in making new friends and developing solid friendships was so awesome. It was well worth it!

Congratulations on your Senior Year and your successful club volleyball journey!

Love Mom, Dad, Julia, and Melissa



OLIVIA ELLIOTT



COCO IKPE

Vanden High School / CSU Dominguez Hills – Carson, CA

California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH, Dominguez Hills, or Cal State Dominguez Hills) is a public university in Carson, CA. It was founded in 1960 and is part of the California State University (CSU) system. In Fall 2016 the university had a total enrollment of 14,731 students comprising 12,632 undergraduates (86%) and 2,099 post baccalaureates (14%), with over half of the student population identifying as the first in their families to go to college. The campus sits on the historic Rancho San Pedro, the oldest land grant in the Los Angeles area. The land was in the continuous possession of the Dominguez family through seven generations – from its concession to Juan Jose Dominguez in 1784 to its acquisition by the people of the state of California for the university. The campus mascot is the Toro, Spanish for bull.

Coco earned the Monticello Empire (MEL) All-League honors the last 2 years and was Captain of the Vanden varsity volleyball team her senior year. She is also an Athletic Scholar all 4 years of high school.

Coco will pursue a degree in Biology: Cellular & Molecular at CSU Dominguez Hills.

Coco, our daughter, finally a senior.

Wow, how time has flown. You've grown into a wonderful young woman right before our eyes. We remember you trying as many sports as you could; basketball, baton, gymnastics, figure skating and then the holy grail volleyball! You fell in love immediately and we could tell by your passion for the game that this was something that truly brought you joy. You are smart, compassionate, and diligent, and willing to help a friend in need or commit to a project.

As you take this next step in your education and life, we want you to know how proud we are of you. All your hard work has culminated to this moment. There's still work to be done but we must celebrate the accomplishments along the way. Everyday you teach us something new and the house will be slightly quieter while you're away – thankfully you're only 6 hours away!

We love you very much and are so proud of you. Keep shining baby!

Love,
Mom and Dad



COCO IKPE



ISABELLA LIPACIS

Head-Royce School / Colorado College – Colorado Springs, CO

Colorado College is a private liberal arts college in Colorado Springs, CO. It was founded in 1874 by Thomas Nelson Haskell in his daughter's memory. The college enrolls approximately 2,000 undergraduates at its 90-acre campus, 70 miles south of Denver. Colorado College was ranked as the best private college in Colorado by Forbes, and was listed as tied for the 23rd-best National Liberal Arts College, and as the No. 1 Most Innovative Liberal Arts School, in the 2018 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. In addition, *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* ranked Colorado College 16th in its 2018 rating of best value liberal arts colleges in the U.S.

Isabella was the starting OH on Head Royce's volleyball team the last three years, leading the Jayhawks to three straight league championships and undefeated seasons in the Bay Counties League (BCL). In her Senior year, she was Captain of the team and voted the BCL Most Valuable Player of the Year. Since her Sophomore season, Isabella earned All-League First Team honors in the BCL. As a Freshman, she played on the D-5 California State Championship Volleyball Team for Head Royce. In competitive volleyball, Isabella was named Captain of her U-16 and U-17 club teams and led her U-16 team to a 5th place finish in AAU's and selected to the All-American AAU Tournament Team in 2018.

Isabella will be Undeclared entering Colorado College. She becomes the third Xceleration alumni to enter the Tigers volleyball program.

Dear Isabella,

What a treat it has been to watch you grow as a student-athlete for the past decade, be it in basketball, soccer, lacrosse, skiing or volleyball. Through the ups and downs, the tears and laughs, your athletic and leadership abilities on and off the court were always remarkable, and always a constant. We couldn't be more proud!

We will always treasure the trips we took with you to watch you play volleyball: high school in the fall, club in the winter and spring, and Latvian camp in the summer. Now, we can't wait to travel to Colorado Springs to watch you play for Colorado College. We can imagine the next step in your career as a student-athlete will be even more intense – we bet it will be even more rewarding. Go Bella! Go Tigers!

Love always,
Mama and Papa



ISABELLA LIPACIS



**COLORADO
COLLEGE**

SARA McBRIDE

Benicia High School/UC Santa Cruz – Santa Cruz, CA

The **University of California, Santa Cruz** (also known as UC Santa Cruz or UCSC) is a public research university in Santa Cruz, CA. It is one of 10 campuses in the University of California system. Founded in 1965, UC Santa Cruz began as a showcase for progressive, cross-disciplinary undergraduate education, innovative teaching methods and contemporary architecture. While still retaining its reputation for strong undergraduate support and student political activism, it has since evolved into a modern research university with a wide variety of both undergraduate and graduate programs. The residential college system, which consists of ten small colleges, is intended to combine the student support of a small college with the resources of a major university.

Sara was on the 2019 Diablo Athletic League (DAL) 1st Team All-League team and, in 2018, the league MVP for the DAL. In both those years when Sara served as Captain of the Varsity volleyball team, her Benicia HS Panthers went undefeated in league and were league champions. In 2019, the Vallejo Times Herald also recognized Sara an Athlete of the Week.

Academically, Sara is a North Coast Section Scholar Athlete, a National Society of High School Scholars, and on the Principal's Scholars Honor Roll.

Sara will major in Chemistry at UC Santa Cruz. She plans to join the Peace Corps after her undergraduate studies and go to medical school to be a dermatologist.

Sara,

Words can't even begin to express how unbelievably proud I am of you. The obstacles and hardships you have had to endure to accomplish your goals have, at some moments, seemed insurmountable. In the midst of it all, volleyball has been your anchor. Your passion and leadership on the court has been truly amazing to watch and I have enjoyed every minute of it. Your love of the game comes through with every smile, cheer, and dance move on the court. I am truly grateful for all the friendships we both have made throughout the years and all your unbelievable coaches who have instilled the ethics of hard work and sportsmanship. I know you will take all the life lessons you have learned that have made you so resilient and apply them as you continue your journey through life. There is no mountain too high that you cannot climb. You have grown up to be a such a beautiful young lady both inside and out and full of kindness, compassion and courage. Stay true to yourself and your aspirations!

*Love you more!!
Mom*



SARA McBRIDE



LAUREN McGRATH

Carondelet High School/Cal Poly SLO – San Luis Obispo, CA

California Polytechnic State University (California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, or Cal Poly) is a public university in San Luis Obispo, CA. It is one of two polytechnics in the California State University system. The university is organized into six colleges offering 65 bachelor's and 39 master's degrees. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo primarily focuses on undergraduate education and as of fall 2018 Cal Poly has 21,037 undergraduate and 775 graduate students. The academic focus is fostering a comprehensive undergraduate education, combining technical and professional curricula with the arts and humanities. The university is located in San Luis Obispo, California, often noted as one of the happiest cities in the United States, with many alumni in Silicon Valley.

Lauren and the Carondelet Cougars placed 2nd in the North Coast Section and she has played two Varsity seasons. At Carondelet, Lauren finished in the top 10 finalists for valedictorian, served as President of both the Mathletes Club and Asian Music Club, is an AP scholar with honors, and a member of the green team leadership club.

Lauren will major in Manufacturing Engineering at Cal Poly.

Lauren, as your volleyball carrier comes closer to the end, we can honestly say it has been a pleasure to have been along for the ride...

The early mornings.....

The long drives.....

The flying to other cities.....and barely seeing them..... except the inside of convention centers.

More importantly we have enjoyed watching you grow Lauren...

as a player,

as a teammate,

and as a beautiful person.

We look forward to the next chapter in your life as college is right around the corner. Congratulations on your acceptance to Cal Poly SLO!



LAUREN McGRATH

Carondelet High School



CHLOE ORTEGA

St. Patrick-St. Vincent High School/Cal State East Bay – Hayward, CA

California State University, East Bay (Cal State East Bay, CSU East Bay, or CSUEB) is a public university in Hayward, CA. The university is part of the 23-campus California State University system and offers 136 undergraduate and 60 post-baccalaureate areas of study. Founded in 1957, California State University, East Bay has a student body of almost 15,000. In Fall 2018, it had 877 faculty, of whom 339 (or 39%) were on the tenure track. The university's largest and oldest college campus is located in Hayward, with additional campus-sites in the nearby cities of Oakland and Concord. With multiple campuses across the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area, the school changed its name from *California State University, Hayward* to *California State University, East Bay* in 2005.

Chloe is a 4-year varsity letter winner and was awarded MVP honors for the St. Patrick-St. Vincent (SPSV) girls varsity volleyball team her senior year; she was also the "Most Inspirational" player voted by varsity teammates, Varsity Captain, and Tri-County Athletic League (TCAL) All-League 2nd team honoree. In her Junior year, she helped SPSV take the TCAL Rock Division League Championship title, was TCAL All-League 1st team, and received the Coaches Award.

Outside of volleyball, Chloe was All-Student Body (ASB) Vice-President, Homecoming Queen, member of Future Nurses Club and Filipino Club, Junior Student Council Vice-President, Sophomore Student Council Secretary, and Freshman Student Council Secretary.

Chloe will major in Health Sciences at CSUEB.

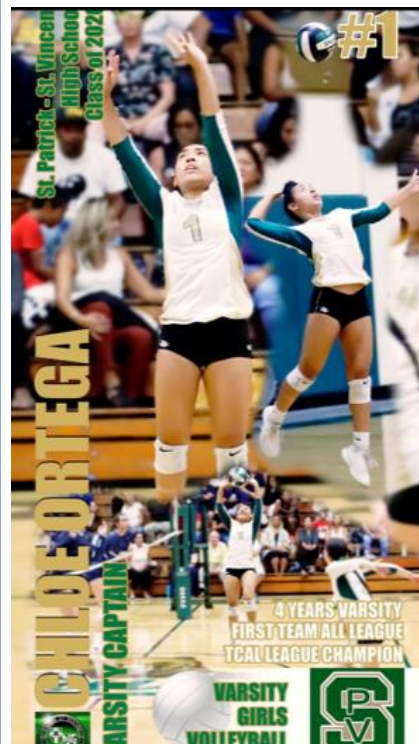
Our dearest Chloe, Bubba, Babygirl,

The thought of us writing this heartfelt message as you are in your final club season with Xceleration is bittersweet to say the least. From the time you touched that volleyball at age 8, we have been blessed and thankful on how you play the game. You have the heart of a champion both on and off the court. As long as you continue to smile and be happy, then your volleyball journey continues. We are grateful to be a part of it and we are excited to watch you play in the next level. We will always be here to support you.

*We love you always,
Mom, Dad, Drew and Matt*



CHLOE ORTEGA



"Hard work beats talent when talent fails to work hard"
- Kevin Durant

SADIE PEETE

California High School / Cal Lutheran – Thousand Oaks, CA

California Lutheran University (CLU, Cal Lutheran, or Cal Lu) is a private liberal arts university in Thousand Oaks, CA. It was founded in 1959 and is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, but is nonsectarian. It opened in 1960 as California Lutheran College and was California's first four-year liberal arts college and the first four-year private college in Ventura County. The school was constructed in the early 1960s on nearly 300 acres of land, much of the which had been donated by Richard Pederson, the son of Norwegian immigrants and a member of the Norwegian Colony. Pederson donated 130 acres, while more was purchased from other ranchers.

Sadie was an East Bay Athletic League (EBAL) Player of the Year and a 4-year EBAL All-League recipient. As team Captain, Sadie led the California High School Grizzlies to win EBAL Championships.

Outside of volleyball, Sadie is a 4-time North Coast Section (NCS) Scholar Athlete. She was awarded Cal Lutheran's Presidential Scholarship and was accepted into the University Honors Program. At Cal Lutheran, Sadie will work towards a degree in Exercise Science.

Sadie,

It has been an amazing experience watching your journey through these early years. You have stepped up to every challenge put in front of you and persevered with hard work and fantastic attitude. And your sense of humor is second to none. These traits will carry you far.

We are very proud of you... not just for your accomplishments, but who you have become. Continue to push yourself in your next chapter, both on and off the court, and show the world what a determined woman can accomplish.

Go Regals!!

*We love you,
Mom, Dad,
Natalie, and Daisy*





ISHANA RAM

Foothill High School / Emory University – Atlanta, GA

Emory University is a private research university in Atlanta, Georgia. The university was founded as **Emory College** in 1836 in Oxford, GA, by the Methodist Episcopal Church and was named in honor of Methodist bishop John Emory. In 1915, Emory College moved to its present location in Druid Hills and was re-chartered as Emory University. Its relocation was funded by Asa Griggs Candler, a businessman and philanthropist who wanted a major university in the city. Emory maintained a presence in Oxford; its institution developed as Oxford College, a residential liberal arts college for the first two years of the Emory baccalaureate degree. The university is the second-oldest private institution of higher education in Georgia and among the fifty oldest private universities in the United States. Emory is one of the top 2 schools in the country for Biomedical Engineering.

Ishana played on the Foothill HS Varsity team as a starting setter for 3 years. She helped lead her team to be the East Bay Athletic League championship and state runner up in 2018. In her Senior year, Ishana was awarded the TV30 East Bay Athlete of the Year and was a Captain of her team.

Ishana is a Scholar-Athlete at Foothill HS, with a 4.0 GPA; she will major in Biomedical Engineering at Emory.

From the moment you picked up a volleyball in 5th grade, we knew we are in for a beautiful story here! So happy that you developed a penchant for setting early on and thanks to the encouragement from coaches who truly believed that you had the right temperament and “soft hands” to be an excellent setter. We truly enjoyed watching you blossom into a strong setter under the guidance of Jeff Cole when you played for Norcal 13’s team.

On the floor, we always loved your energy, positive attitude and a huge smile that brightened us and your teammates. Along with a smile, we also saw that competitive spirit and how you gave your best for every point. We were amazed how easily you made friends no matter which team you were on and so the title “Ms. Congeniality” that many of your coaches gave you is well deserving. We know you genuinely care for your teammates and enjoyed all your great stories while making lifelong friends along the way.

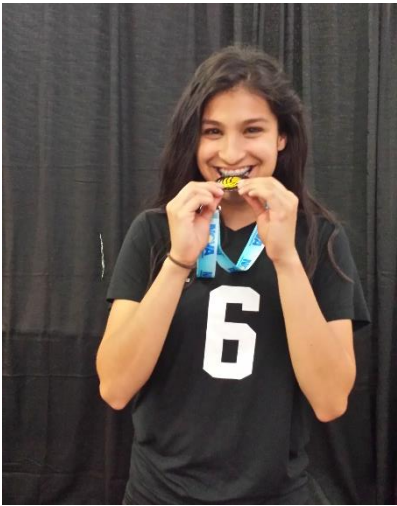
Volleyball has been such a big part of your (our) life and it has given you a sense of purpose. You have learned to take defeat in its stride and not to repeat the same mistakes. You have learned to celebrate success/wins without growing overconfident. You have learned valuable life lessons from volleyball that hard work and determination pays off in the end.

Although your volleyball life in the Bay Area is coming to an end, we are so proud of the fact that you will start your new journey at Emory, huge thanks to Jim Ross for his persistence. We would like to thank you for all the joy (and pain!) you have brought us through your volleyball days and mostly for giving us an amazing volleyball family, which is a true blessing in life! We wish you the best in life as you pursue your undergrad studies at Emory.

Go Xcel! Go Eagles!



ISHANA RAM



JULIA REMIGIO

St. Mary's College High School/San Francisco State University

San Francisco State University (commonly referred to as **San Francisco State**, **SF State** and **SFSU**) is a public university in San Francisco. As part of the 23-campus California State University system, the university offers 118 different bachelor's degrees, 94 master's degrees, and 5 doctoral degrees along with 26 teaching credentials among six academic colleges. The university was founded in 1899 as a state-run normal school for training school teachers, obtaining state college status in 1921 and state university status in 1972. The 141-acre campus is located in the southwest part of the city, less than two miles from the Pacific Coast. San Francisco State has 12 varsity athletic teams which compete at the NCAA Division II level, most as members of the California Collegiate Athletic Association.

Julia cherished her final year at St. Mary's College HS, where she was on the Honor Roll all four years. Julia also was a chorus member and brought joy to her fellow and future classmates – she had the distinguished role of the “morning announcement Happy Birthday singer” and a tour guide for prospective students. At San Francisco State, Julia will major in Studio Arts, focusing on film and photography.

Julia: your dad and I are so proud of you! You have grown into such a smart, caring, conscientious, responsible, and compassionate adult! You are beautiful inside and out.

You overcame a lot of adversity this year and although I know you had some disappointments, you emerged a stronger person because of it. We're so happy that you got into the school of your choice in the program you wanted. We wish for you the very best as you pursue your passion in life.

We can't wait to see what other wonderful things you accomplish as you move onto the next phase of your life!

Mom & Dad



JULIA REMIGIO

St. Mary's College High School/San Francisco State University



DAYNA RIGGIO-KERLEY

Albany High School/College of Marin – Kentfield, CA

College of Marin is a public community college in Marin County, CA, with two campuses, one in Kentfield, and the second in Novato. It is the only institution operated by the Marin Community College District. Originally known as Marin Junior College when established in 1926, the College was renamed College of Marin in 1947. Each semester, about 10,000 students are enrolled in over 1,100 credit classes. Approximately 100 international students participate in College of Marin's International Student Program. Nearly 6,000 students attend the college's community education and community services classes. College of Marin is known for its theatre department, which has the highest transfer acceptance to Juilliard of any two-year college in the nation.

Dayna is a four-year varsity player at Albany HS and earned 1st team and 2nd team All- League honors from the Tri-County Athletic League. She was also a team captain for two years. Also at Albany, Dayna spent three years on yearbook staff and was a senior editor. Dayna will enter the College of Marin as Undeclared.

Dear Dayna,

When you were just five years old, sitting on the sidelines as Shannon played club volleyball we saw your love of the sport develop. We loved watching you do dynamic warm-ups with the team at 7:00am and jump up to pepper with dad during every time out. We have loved nothing more than watching you on the court since the day you started club when you were just 9 years old. No matter how many obstacles and disappointments you have encountered through the years, you never gave up and you would come back stronger and more determined. Even with your season-ending ACL injury in your junior year you worked hard in physical therapy, worked through your fears and got back on the court. Whether injured on the sideline or playing on the court you have always been a great teammate and for that we are so proud of you.

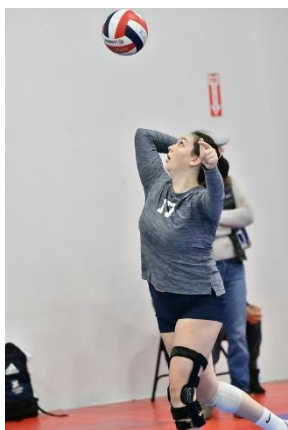
Your club season coming to a screeching halt was just another bump in the road for you but we know it will just make you stronger and more determined because nothing keeps you down.

Can't wait to see you do your thing at College of Marin. Go Mariners!

*Love,
Mom, Dad, Joe, Shannon and Mark*



DAYNA RIGGIO-KERLEY



MADISON "MADI" RISCH

Acalanes High School / Penn – Philadelphia, PA

The University of Pennsylvania (commonly known as **Penn** or **UPenn**) is a private Ivy League research university located in Philadelphia, PA. Benjamin Franklin is Penn's founder. The university coat of arms features a dolphin on the red chief, adopted directly from the Franklin family's own coat of arms. Penn was one of the first academic institutions to follow a multidisciplinary model pioneered by several European universities, concentrating multiple "faculties" (e.g., theology, classics, medicine) into one institution. It was also home to many other educational innovations. The first school of medicine in North America (Perelman School of Medicine, 1765), the first collegiate business school (Wharton School of Business, 1881), and the first "student union" building and organization (Houston Hall, 1896) were founded at Penn.

Madi was a 4-year starting Varsity Player at Acalanes HS (AHS), a three-time First Team all Diablo Athletic League (2017-2019), a two-time varsity team Captain and MVP, a 2019 North Coast Section (NCS) Silver Medalist, a 2018 Bronze Medalist in the Northern CA Beach HS League, and a 2016 CA Division III Champion (only underclassmen starter all season).

Academically, Madi has earned numerous awards: the 2018 AAU Academic All American Award, four-time Scholar Athlete Award, four-time California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) President's List Award, four-time California Scholarship Federation and member of National Society of Schools Scholars. At Acalanes HS, she spent four years in the Acalanes Leadership Program, AHS Debate Club & Environment Club, AHS New Crew Leader, AHS C.A.R.E Workshop Leader, and AHS Tour Guide.

Madi will major in Economics at Penn.



MADISON "MADI" RISCH

To our dearest Madi,

It seems like just yesterday you were in the sixth grade and first started playing volleyball. It is hard to believe, and even a little bittersweet that the time has come to write a letter like this to you. From the time you were very young, we all knew you were a special person. You put 100% into everything you do, always trying to be the best person, friend, relative, student, and teammate possible. You have always cared more about others than yourself and have worked so hard over the years to make the world a better place. How many times have we had to tell you to slow down with your studies, workouts, middle school and high school extracurricular activities, that perfection is impossible? But we all know now that you only have one speed, and that is one of the things that makes you so special. Whether on the court playing or cheering from the bench, whether you are studying extra hard for that one subject that drives you crazy or just being there for a friend or family member in need, you give it your all and it is so fun to watch!

We know this has been a very difficult year for you. The last few months of high school and club volleyball should be the best of times. With school being closed, not being able to see all your friends and teammates every day, senior week and senior ball being cancelled, you have been forced to adapt to a new way of life. We are inspired by your positive attitude, independence and focus on what can be done rather than what cannot be done. You always do view the glass as half full!

Madi, now it is time to finish this part of your life journey and move on to the next chapter in Philadelphia at UPENN as a young Quaker. You accomplished your goals and deserve all the rewards. And while we are sad to see you leave, we know you have developed the work ethic, maturity, sense of community, and independence needed for you to thrive. We look forward to watching you throughout your college journey and will always be there in your corner if ever needed.

Love forever,

Mom, Dad, Steven and Connor



ISABEL STRAND

Monte Vista High School/UC San Diego – La Jolla, CA

The **University of California, San Diego** is a public research university located in the La Jolla area of San Diego, CA. The university occupies 2,141 acres near the coast of the Pacific Ocean. Established in 1960 near the pre-existing Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego is the seventh oldest of the 10 UC campuses and offers over 200 undergraduate and graduate degree programs, enrolling about 23,800 undergraduate and 6,500 graduate students. UC San Diego is one of America's Public Ivy universities, which recognizes top public research universities in the U.S. UC San Diego was ranked 8th among public universities and 37th among all universities in the U.S., and rated the 18th Top World University by *U.S. News & World Report's* 2015 rankings.

Izzi and her Monte Vista Mustangs reached the California Interscholastic Federation Division I playoffs. She was also selected on the East Bay Athletic League (EBAL) First Team and All-State Third Team, while academically achieving a 4.2 GPA in her senior year. Izzi will major in International Business at UC San Diego.

Izzi,

We couldn't be more thrilled about both your academic and athletic accomplishments. Even through adversity, you've achieved your goal of a scholarship at a D1 school. You found the perfect combination at UCSD. We are excited to see where your dreams and passion take you. We love you so much.

Mom and Dad



ISABEL STRAND

Monte Vista High School/UC San Diego – La Jolla, CA



TAYLOR WHYTE

Vanden High School/Chico State University – Chico, CA

California State University, Chico (also known as **CSU Chico** or **Chico State**), is the second oldest campus in the 23-campus California State University system. It is located in Chico, CA, about 90 miles north of Sacramento. The university has a total enrollment of nearly 18,000 students. The university offers 126 types of bachelor's degrees, 35 types of master's degrees, and four types of teaching credentials.

Taylor was a 3-year Varsity letterman where she led the league in kills as a sophomore. Taylor was instrumental in Vanden HS winning the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) championships for their division. She was also voted team MVP and awarded the Scholar Athlete. Even though she's been playing volleyball since the 3rd grade she has remained on Honor Roll her entire time.

Taylor is a member of the Honors Society. She will major in Criminal Justice at Chico State University.

Taylor we are so proud of all the hard work, dedication, and perseverance you have shown throughout the years as both a student and an athlete. We remember the first time you played volleyball for the city league and I could tell you were going to be great. With your determination and the help of great coaches, you have made it to the next level, and we can't wait to see where the next chapter in your life will lead you. All the memories, the trips the laughs, the tears, and the friends you have made along the way of your journey will stay with you forever. You have the whole world in front of you as you move to the next chapter, your only limitations you have is your imagination.





KYLIE WOOD

Acalanes High School/ San Jose State University – San Jose, CA

San José State University is a comprehensive public university and is the founding school of the 23 campus California State University system. It holds the distinction of being the oldest public institution of higher education on the West Coast of the U.S. SJSU's total enrollment is approximately 30,000, including nearly 6,000 graduate students. More San José State University alumni are hired by Silicon Valley firms than any other college or university, and philanthropic support of SJSU is among the highest in the CSU system.

Kylie played Varsity volleyball at Acalanes HS, where in 2019 the Dons were the NCS Division III Finalist - 2nd Place and qualified for the California State Playoffs Division 2.

Kylie is planning to major in Environmental Science at San Jose State University.

Dear Kylie,

Despite the disappointments of this shortened last season and your senior year, you will still have so many great memories of volleyball and friends. It has been so much fun to watch you during your high school and club seasons, and here's hoping that volleyball will continue to be a part of your life, through playing, coaching and friendships. A big thank you to your coaches and teammates at Acalanes and Xcel for nurturing and sustaining your love for volleyball.

We are so proud of you and the amazing, thoughtful, compassionate, lovely young woman you have grown up to be. Enjoy your hard-earned independence in college, continue to pursue what you are passionate about, and never settle for less than what you deserve (everything).

*We love you so much!
Mom, Dad & Kira*



KYLIE WOOD



2020 18Blue



Coaches Andy Schroeder and Brett Leggitt

2020 18White



Coaches Salomon Leon and Haley Walsh

